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COMMITTEE  
FOR BOSTON  
PUBLIC  
HOUSING

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1981 - 1991  
ANNUAL REPORT  
COMMEMORATING  
TEN YEARS OF WORKING  
WITH BOSTON PUBLIC  
HOUSING TENANTS



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## MISSION STATEMENT

*The Committee for Boston Public Housing, Inc. (CBPH) is a private, non-profit organization committed to social and economic justice for low-income people. It works with public housing residents toward their empowerment to enhance the quality of their lives.*

*The Committee's work and organizational structure reflect the belief that change will be achieved through a partnership among tenants, human service agencies, the Boston Housing Authority (BHA), city and state government, and private funders. Its governing body is comprised of BHA tenants, human service agency representatives, BHA officials, and community members-at-large. CBPH seeks to make available quality economic, social, educational, recreational, and health services in local housing developments and across the city.*

## CBPH PROGRAMS

*The CBPH operates two major programs, the Family-Community Resource Center (FCRC) and the Washington-Beech Community Preschool (WBCP).*

*The FCRC works with tenant organizations in 11 BHA family developments, concentrating on the needs of low-income women and children. It has helped tenants across the city to create and improve services in a number of areas, including child care, youth services, adult literacy, transportation, recreation, and family support. It has also helped to secure and renovate buildings, basements, and outdoor spaces for new programs and community centers. The FCRC stresses tenant participation in all aspects of its work — rather than “doing for” tenants, it helps tenants do for themselves. It combines community organizing, training, program development, and advocacy with a focus on helping tenants to collaborate with other public and private agencies. Leadership development is a key element of its success in helping to foster individual and community empowerment.*

*The WBCP is a model preschool program serving children and families in the Washington-Beech housing development in Roslindale. It grew from FCRC organizing and program development efforts with tenants and has received widespread attention for its collaborative success and innovative multi-cultural, anti-bias curriculum.*

**Cover photo:** Even school age children enjoy the playground behind the Washington-Beech Community Preschool in Roslindale. Designed by parents working with the CBPH, the playground was built in 1986 with private foundation support.





Thelma Hyatt has served as president of the Committee for Boston Public Housing since 1987. Formerly assistant director of the Child Care Resource Center, she first joined the Board in 1984 as a human service agency representative. "They didn't even know I lived in public housing when they asked me to be on the board," she said in a recently-published interview. "They wanted someone who had expertise in the area of child care, because it is such a big need in public housing."

As a 1990-91 MIT Community Fellow, Thelma studied national models of family support in low-income communities. Last year she was recognized by the Boston Foundation for her outstanding leadership.

Thelma Hyatt moved from the Gallivan development in 1990 after 17 years, but remains active in that community as well as in her role as CBPH President.



**There's a thread of gold in the model we have: empowerment of tenants. We're fostering a sense of community and a sense that 'I can control my own life.'**

Thelma Hyatt  
President of the Board

**Q. You gave a very moving acceptance speech when you were first elected as President of the CBPH.**

Well, it meant a lot to be asked to be President, coming from public housing myself and having been on welfare. It shows that public housing people have things to offer, and it goes against the stereotypes of so-called project people. I know what it is to be on welfare—it keeps you down. I feel like I'm at a place in my life now where I can give, where maybe my experience can help others.

**Q. Do you see a role for the CBPH in helping to organize services and put supports in place so people can have long term success?**

Yes, but it's hard, because there are so many problems out there. We're just one agency, and this devastation has been happening for a long time. At Gallivan, they were sucking the staff person up almost like he was a soda pop, because there are so many needs. Everybody had something they wanted him to do. It happened like that because for so long we hadn't had anything.

**Q. Tenants have majority control of the Board, so if they want to flex some muscle—**

They really can. That's why I see the role of CBPH as helping people feel that they have that power. It's true in the developments too. There are a lot of people there, but it's hard for low income people to organize. When I'm worried about coming home every day and just getting a meal, when I'm worried about getting

my kids to school, or whether I have day care or whether I have a place over my head or how to pay the rent, sometimes I don't have that kind of feeling that I have a lot of power, because you're so drained and tired. That's an important role for the Committee—to help empower people.

**Q. And that means bringing people together?**

Yes, and in different ways. Low-income people are getting pitted against each other all the time, and they need to unite. I don't care if you live in South Boston or Dorchester or if you live in Charlestown or Mattapan. It's still public housing and it carries some of the same stigma.

**Q. Last question: is there any advice you would give, or anything you would ask of people reading this?**

The thing I really want to relate to people is that you're just as good as anybody else, that you can do a lot of things. You just have to rely on yourself and have faith in yourself that you can do it. It doesn't mean sometimes that you can do it all this year, or next year, or next year. Sometimes you have to take off little bite-size pieces that you can really chew up and swallow yourself.

## The BHA, Receivership, and the Origins of CBPH

The Boston Housing Authority is Boston's single largest residential landlord. It owns and/or operates some 67 developments encompassing over 20,000 housing units.

Throughout the 60s and 70s, BHA tenants were obliged to live under unacceptable housing conditions. The BHA administration was unwilling and financially unable to respond to the basic maintenance and security requirements of an aging and rapidly deteriorating housing inventory. These conditions led to a protracted series of legal battles, including a class action suit by tenants in 1975 to force BHA compliance with sanitary codes. This in turn led to extensive court involvement in the operations of the BHA and finally, in 1980, to the appointment of a Receiver with sweeping and direct powers over the management of the Authority.

The Receiver, Lewis H. (Harry) Spence, focused on two primary goals: rebuilding the housing stock and rebuilding a sense of community among residents. Physical redevelopment efforts focused on reorganizing the planning and construction management functions to make them more efficient, and on securing funds for large scale redevelopment of selected facilities.

Spence moved to create resources for local tenant organizations... to provide vehicles for tenants to undertake activities of their own design. Toward that end, he worked with community leaders to establish the Committee for Boston Public Housing in 1981 as an independent organization that could raise and manage funds to support the development of tenant initiatives.

CBPH was a collaborative effort involving housing authority officials, tenants, and local community organizations.



*Youth were involved from the start in efforts to reopen Gallivan's Butler Building.*

Many of Boston's public housing developments were built just after the second World War as a way of providing affordable housing to World War II veterans and their families. People who lived in public housing at that time described it as a decent, safe, and clean place to live where residents felt a strong sense of pride in their communities.

In the 1960s and 70s, however, public housing deteriorated because of poor management, corruption, and lack of funding. By the mid-1970s, over one quarter of all BHA units lay vacant. Even in occupied apartments, walls, stairways, and windows crumbled. Electrical, plumbing and heating systems broke down and were left unrepaired. Lack of heat and hot water during winter months were common problems, and most apartments were infested with rats, mice, or roaches.

In 1980, as a result of a class action suit brought against the housing authority, the BHA was placed in the hands of a court-appointed receiver (see *The BHA, Receivership, and the Origins of CBPH*).

Charged with rebuilding public housing, the BHA Receiver linked capital repairs with improving the social fabric of public housing communities. The Committee for Boston Public Housing was established to involve tenants directly in planning and management decisions over issues ranging from full scale capital renovation projects to public safety and local trash collection. From 1981 through 1983, the first CBPH program, the Community Capacity Building Project (CCBP), helped to build strong, democratic tenant organizations in five BHA family developments. All of them achieved concrete improvements in local housing conditions and community services.

In September, 1983, the CBPH embarked on a one year period of structured evaluation and planning for a new project which could focus specifically on human service needs.

Community organizing on housing conditions, public safety, and relations with the BHA was off to a good start. An independent organization, Tenants United for Public Housing Progress, was being formed to expand this work. The CBPH Board sought new resources to help tenants improve social services and economic opportunities, especially for women and young families.

In September, 1984, CBPH founded the Family-Community Resource Center (FCRC) to help tenants assess social service needs in their developments and to assemble resources to meet those needs in innovative ways. FCRC staff were placed full time in five BHA developments, including four of the original CCBP sites. They undertook four months of intensive research with tenants to assess local social service needs, including a door-to-door survey of over 750 families. The resulting report, *Beyond the Safety Net: Families in Boston Housing Authority Developments*, provided the basis for subsequent FCRC community organizing and program development work with tenants in each development.



# 10

1981 1991

- 1981 Committee for Boston Public Housing founded  
Community Capacity Building Project (CCBP) begins, works for 3 years
- 1984 Family-Community Resource Center (FCRC) begins
- 1985 *Beyond the Safety Net* published
- 1986 Washington-Beech Community Preschool opens
- 1987 Tenants assume majority status on CBPH Board
- 1990 FCRC reorganized
- 1991 CBPH receives Boston Fair Housing Award

*Beyond the Safety Net* revealed serious needs for child care, recreation, family services, job training, adult education, and employment. It demonstrated that residents are experts about public housing needs, and that effective services require direct tenant participation in program planning, implementation, and evaluation. It also showed that residents are committed to working together to improve life for their families and communities.

Using an empowerment model based on self-help and community organizing principles, the FCRC began working with tenant committees to evaluate existing services, identify local priorities, and work with public and private agencies to change restrictive policies, improve existing services, and develop new programs. Often, this involved helping to secure and renovate buildings, basements, and outdoor spaces, so there would be places in which new programs and services could be delivered.

Child care emerged as a top priority across the city, and the FCRC has helped to develop several new day care centers and afterschool programs (see page 8). The program has also helped to create and improve adult literacy, transportation, recreation, counseling, family support, and youth services. For example, in 1987, teens at Washington-Beech challenged Mayor Raymond L. Flynn to a basketball game, and asked his help in establishing a teen center in the development. The Mayor responded positively, and the Center opened in April, 1988, staffed with city youth workers. Also in response to tenant organizing, Mayor Flynn and the City Council committed over \$4.6 million to renovate abandoned gym buildings at Archdale and Gallivan. The buildings opened as community multi-service centers in early 1991, operated by the Boston Community Schools and directed by tenants who had helped to lead community development efforts.

The Family-Community Resource Center expanded rapidly in the mid-1980s, contracting with local tenant organizations which for the first time had access to state funds for supportive services. The new resources were made available through a distribution formula conceived by BHA Administrator Doris Bunté, and administered through the BHA. Along with community organizing and program development work, staff organized job and education fairs and provided door-to-door outreach and recruitment to help individuals take advantage of education, employment, and training opportunities. Before state supportive service funds were eliminated in the fall of 1990, the FCRC helped to place hundreds of tenants in jobs and adult literacy, higher education, career counseling, and vocational training programs. The FCRC has also helped tenants organize numerous events and activities to build community and provide family support, including holiday parties, arts and crafts classes, camping trips, and multi-cultural celebrations.

## On Empowerment

To break the cycle of poverty and failure, people and institutions must provide services for young people who live in poverty; parents and communities must become active partners in change by defining what services are needed.

For this reason community empowerment is an important component of projects for low-income children. CBPH's Family Community Resource Center utilizes the empowerment approach.

Empowerment involves people seeing themselves as active and effective actors in confronting issues in their own lives. They become active players in the creation and implementation of decisions and processes which affect them. As a result, they are accorded basic respect as individuals and communities willing to take responsibility for their own choices and actions.

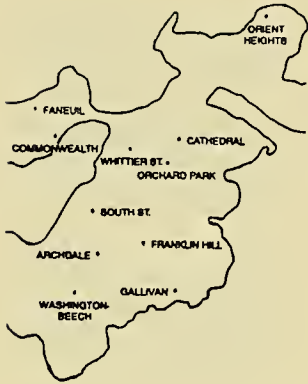
Although the empowerment process begins with the individual, large-scale change occurs only through cooperative action... A network can lead an individual to develop other skills. At the informal level, a mother may gain insights on disciplining her child or become part of a loosely-knit playgroup. At a more formal level, she might discover her family's eligibility for a nutrition program or learn about a new adult literacy class which would meet her own needs. Growing confidence can lead to an increased ability to interact more forcefully with people and institutions.

—Executive Director Mary Lassen has headed the CBPH since 1984.



# TAKING PRIDE IN

**"To be in a low-income area does not mean you must settle for second best."**  
—Public housing resident



The FCRC works in 11 of the 24 BHA family developments. According to 1990 BHA statistics, there are 3,082 households in these communities, with a total of 8,804 people. 31 percent of residents are children 12 or younger. An additional 18 percent are youths ages 13-20. A large majority of households are headed by women—over 80 percent in some developments. Racial and ethnic compositions vary, but overall, 46 percent of residents in FCRC-staffed sites are black; 31 percent are white; 20 percent are Latino; and some 3 percent are Asian or Native American.

In 1989, the state's median family income was \$37,809. In developments served by the FCRC, 60 percent of all households have incomes of less than \$11,000 a year. Only 9 percent earn \$20,000 or more.

Local tenant organizations (LTOs) are facing serious challenges in all developments. Most collaborate with public and private agencies, and have built effective relationships with city and state elected officials. Tenant leaders bring outstanding commitment and skill to their community service, and are moving forward despite massive public cuts in child care, education and training, health services, and other programs.

The following profiles give examples of LTO achievements over the past several years. Most activities were undertaken with FCRC staff support. Some involved Tenants United for Public Housing Progress or other community organizers.

## ARCHDALE

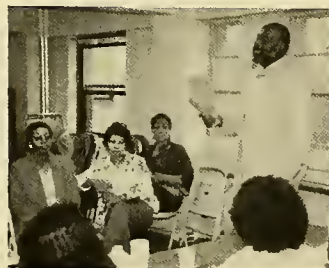


*Archdale Recreation Center groundbreaking, September, 1989*

Archdale, located in Roslindale, has received major capital improvements over the past two years. Its 279 apartments are being renovated, and a new basketball court and playground have been built. In January, tenants celebrated the opening of the new Archdale Recreation Center, a \$2.3 million dollar facility constructed by the city after years of work by Archdale Tenants on the Move (ATOM). Operated by the Boston Community Schools, the Center will host a mix of recreation, education, and social services for the community. Other ATOM priorities and achievements include:

- Development of a new Teen Center, renovated by the BHA and funded through public and private grants, including the Mayor's Safe Neighborhood Fund and Cablevision of Boston;
- Children's programs, including arts and crafts classes, afterschool programs, summer camps, and summer lunch distribution;
- On-site food pantry providing emergency food services for tenants and the surrounding community;
- Parenting skills training program facilitated by professional counselors.

## CATHEDRAL



*Board Member Mel King speaks with residents at a Cathedral tenant organizing meeting*

Cathedral, located in the South End, is in the beginning stages of a major physical redevelopment of its 271 apartments. Close to half of all residents are Spanish-speaking, more than twice the percentage of any other FCRC-staffed development. Cathedral Tenants United is working hard on redevelopment plans, and on a range of other initiatives:

- Development of an afterschool program, staffed by student and community volunteers;
- Programs for seniors, including trips, meals, and arts and crafts classes;
- New park opened on-site in April, 1991.



# W H E R E W E L I V E

**Commonwealth**, in Brighton, is the newest of the FCRC sites, with staff first placed there in mid-1990. The development was completely renovated in the 1980s and served as a model for how low-income communities can be transformed through combined capital and social investment. The Commonwealth Tenants Association (CTA) successfully organized for redevelopment, and built a day care center and local multi-service center. Public funding for organizing and social services has been slashed over the past three years, however, forcing major staff and program cuts. Commonwealth has 380 units.

It is managed privately – by Corcoran Management Co. – with direct CTA control. Other CTA achievements include:

- *Approval by the federal government of a waiver in housing regulations which will enable Commonwealth residents to operate as licensed family day care providers. CTA operates a network of off-site family day care and has sought the waiver for years.*
- *Democratic local elections to the CTA board of directors in March, 1991, resulting in a highly diverse, 18 member task force.*



CTA leader addresses community forum

**Faneuil**, also in Brighton, is one of the original FCRC sites, and has received CBPH services since 1981. The Faneuil Tenants Organization has a long record of achievement, and has collaborated successfully with local public and private institutions, including the Jackson-Mann Community School, City Mission Society, Boston University, and Bull Information Systems. The development has 252 apartments. Examples of successful campaigns and programs include:

- *Development of a licensed, on-site afterschool program, including renovation of basement space by the BHA and private funding of a multi-cultural curriculum;*
- *Community organizing to prevent opening of a proposed liquor store;*
- *Teen programs, including newsletter and teen outreach to seniors;*
- *English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for Latina and Asian mothers.*



Tenant-organized Faneuil June Fest

**Franklin Hill**, in Dorchester, is another of the original FCRC and CBPH sites. A relatively large development, with 335 apartments, it is physically isolated and in need of substantial renovation. Franklin Hill Tenants United (FHTU) has a strong record of collaborations with outside agencies and community organizations, and attracted 180 people to vote in a recent task force election. Drug-related crime and violence are serious problems, but FHTU has a strong record of community improvements, including:

- *Development of an on-site infant, toddler, and preschool child care program – operated by Paige Academy – with federal, state, and private funding;*
- *Establishment of a new MBTA bus route down American Legion Highway;*
- *Development of teen outreach and education programs with the Lee Community School;*
- *On-site registration and recruitment for adult education, employment, and training programs.*



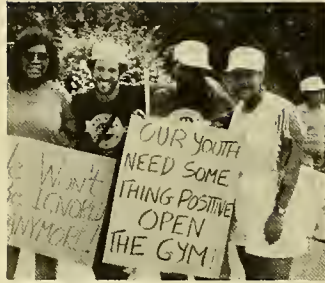
Proud gardener at Franklin Hill

## COMMON-WEALTH

## FANEUIL

## FRANKLIN HILL

## GALLIVAN BOULEVARD



Organizing to renovate Gallivan's Butler Building

Gallivan Boulevard, in Mattapan, is unique in that all its 238 units are in duplex apartments. Drugs and violent crime have become increasingly serious problems, and were key concerns behind the Gallivan Boulevard Tenants Association's successful campaign to get the city to renovate the long-vacant Butler Building. Like Archdale's new Recreation Center, the \$2.3 million facility is operated by Boston Community Schools, with substantial tenant involvement. Other achievements include:

- Construction of a new playground for young children, with public and private funding;
- Collaboration with Boston Community Schools on summer camps, afterschool tutoring programs, and adult education courses;
- Legal action pending to force the BHA to clean-up asbestos and lead paint hazards;
- Active collaboration involving tenants, Boston Police Department, BHA, and elected officials to address crime, drugs, and public safety.

## ORCHARD PARK



Summer festival for children at Orchard Park

Orchard Park, in Roxbury, is an original FCRC site and the largest development served by the CBPH, with 547 occupied apartments. Orchard Park United Tenants Association (OPUTA) collaborates with a number of organizations, and is negotiating now with the city to renovate and reopen a gym and recreation center on-site. Planning and organizing is also underway for local control over a city-owned school building, which OPUTA wants developed into a community multi-service center. In spite of media preoccupation with drugs and violent crime in the development, OPTUA has a number of positive achievements that deserve headlines, including:

- Organization of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous groups, including annual sober dances and education sessions with youths;
- Collaboration with Morgan Memorial on its corporate relocation to Roxbury, with ongoing collaboration including summer camp scholarships, Thanksgiving dinners for seniors and shut-ins, Christmas gifts for children, and OPUTA access to space for community activities;
- BHA- and BCS-funded youth outreach program, and advocacy for youth services as part of OPUTA's membership in the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative.

## ORIENT HEIGHTS



Residents celebrate Unity Day with a picnic

Orient Heights, in East Boston, is in the midst of major physical redevelopment. One of the original CBPH and FCRC sites, the development is geographically isolated but has strong ties to public and private agencies and elected officials. Asians comprise nearly a tenth of all residents, the highest percentage of any FCRC site. The Orient Heights Neighborhood Organization (OHNO) has developed a number of programs and services through the years, and is pushing hard for completion of a new community multi-service center on-site. Achievements include:

- Special outreach to Asian immigrant families, including orientation packages, translation services, and referrals to ESL;
- Youth services, including teen center and multi-cultural youth cooperation program funded through the Mayor's Safe Neighborhood Fund;
- Afterschool tutoring and child care programs developed in collaboration with Harborside Community School and East Boston Social Centers;
- Parent support, summer lunch, adult literacy, and drug and alcohol counseling programs.



# T O L I V E B E T T E R

**South Street**, in Jamaica Plain, is the smallest FCRC-staffed development, with 131 units. It first contracted for a Resource Coordinator in 1988, and received half time services with a focus on adult education, employment, and training outreach and recruitment. The South Street Tenant Task Force is newly represented on the CBPH Board and collaborates with other Jamaica Plain organizations. Task Force initiatives include:

- *Planning for on-site General Equivalency Diploma course;*
- *Planning for on-site afterschool and youth services.*



*Unity Day, summer, 1990*

## SOUTH STREET

**Washington-Beech**, in Roslindale, is an original CBPH and FCRC site, with 260 occupied apartments. The Washington-Beech Community Preschool opened in 1986, after over a year of work by the Washington-Beech Tenant Association (WBTA) and numerous public and private agencies. With FCRC staffing, the WBTA then turned its attention to youth services, developing a teen center in collaboration with the BHA and the Boston Community Schools. Subsequent work has included:

- *Development and operation of low-cost food distribution program;*
- *Anti-drug abuse community events, and collaboration with Boston Against Drugs;*
- *WBTA capacity building and leadership development.*



*Washington-Beech marches for a drug-free community*

## WASHINGTON-BEECH

**Whittier Street**, in Roxbury, is across from the designated site of a major new commercial center. The development has 199 apartments, and hosts the BHA Community Services Department. In 1988, the Whittier Street Tenants Association (WSTA) got the BHA to renovate an empty basement into a center for task force offices, community meetings, youth outreach programs, and other services. WSTA graciously makes the space available for weekly FCRC staff meetings. Tenant leaders have addressed a mix of physical and social service needs over the past several years, including:

- *Construction of a playground for young children, and recruitment for youth summer camps;*
- *Two year collaboration with the Greater Boston YMCA, BHA, and federal, city, and private funders to develop an after school child care program (not opened because of state day care budget cuts);*
- *Organizing with the BHA to improve elevator service to high-rise buildings;*
- *Social activities planned by and for seniors.*



*Whittier Street child wears her pride with a smile*

## WHITTIER STREET

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**"I'd really like to find a day care center for my daughter. She's smart, and I'd like to see her learning numbers and things now to get her ready for school. The more chances we give them, the better. I think our children deserve the best."**

*—Beyond the Safety Net: Families in Boston Housing Authority Developments, 1985*

**"Day care is the keystone of a woman's pursuing a job that can make her more independent, or the training and education needed to get that job."**

*—Centre Research Inc. evaluation of CBPH, 1987*



## CARING FOR CHILDREN

Over 100 people turned out for the Washington-Beech Community Preschool groundbreaking on a cold day in December, 1985. Many had worked for over a year to create the program, after a door-to-door survey had shown accessible, high quality child care to be parents' top priority in the Roslindale housing development. Tenants took the lead in a unique collaboration involving the CBPH, BHA, city and state agencies, local colleges, private funders, and education advocates. The program opened in April, 1986—a proud testimony to the power of tenants working together with outside resources to improve family and community life.

Licensed for 34 children, the WBCP is distinguished by its multi-cultural, anti-bias curriculum. It uses slide shows, pictures, games, and extensive activities to help children better understand themselves, each other, and other people. The center also collaborates with a nearby public elementary school, offering parents a choice of programs for their kindergarten-age children.

The WBCP has received widespread media attention and visits from early childhood and education specialists from around the world. A two year evaluation conducted by Dr. Martha Bronson of Boston College found children attending the center "...showed highly significant superiority on all mastery skills and scored above others in most social variables as well."

A second evaluation, conducted by Technical Development Corporation, found that the center "also has had a positive impact on the parents of attending children.... For some WBCP parents, the day care center gave them their first opportunity to pursue education, training, or employment. For others, it supported and helped them to expand their vision and aspirations."

The WBCP established the CBPH as a capable partner in helping other tenant organizations to address child care needs. For example, at Franklin Hill in Dorchester, tenants lobbied successfully for nearly \$300,000 in state funds to renovate a basement for a new infant, toddler, and preschool center. Tenants chose Paige Academy of Roxbury to operate the program, and the CBPH helped Paige raise \$100,000 in federal funds for start-up and operations. The program opened in 1989.

The CBPH also worked closely with parents at the Orient Heights, Faneuil, and Whittier Street developments to create afterschool programs with other public and private agencies. State cuts in child care prevented the opening of one program and forced another to close after three years of operation. State cuts have also reduced enrollment and forced layoffs at the WBCP, but the program still enjoys strong public and private support. Its curriculum is being considered now for widespread dissemination.



# A NEW TEAM MODEL

Profound times require profound responses, and the state's economic crisis has forced major changes at the Committee for Boston Public Housing. In October, 1990, Governor Dukakis eliminated the Supportive Services Program (SSP), which funded community organizing and outreach in public housing. The SSP provided 29 percent of FCRC operating revenues, and was the sole source of funding for many local tenant organizations.

The response was the same as that taken by scores of other human service agencies in Massachusetts: cut staffing and expenses. The CBPH laid off three staff members in the late fall, and eliminated five additional positions through attrition. Non-personnel operating expenses were also reduced.

The CBPH Board of Directors went further, however, recognizing that with the loss of other SSP-funded programs, the FCRC's resources were more essential than ever. After intensive planning, the Board adopted a reorganization plan with the following priorities:

- keep as many staff as possible working directly with local tenant organizations (LTOs);
- continue implementing the CBPH Long Range Plan, with particular emphasis on improved training for LTOs, staff, and Board members;
- help strengthen LTO planning and organizational capacity;
- address LTOs community organizing needs;
- continue building the CBPH as a multi-cultural, anti-racist organization;
- protect the CBPH's fiscal stability as a long-term resource for LTOs.

To achieve these objectives, the Board cut the central staff in half and reorganized the FCRC field staff into three teams, each with a special area of focus.

The new teams — community organizing, training, and program development — each include four people, with a team leader responsible for supervision and coordination of activities with other teams. The FCRC

continues to serve 11 BHA family developments, but individual staff are no longer assigned to specific sites. Rather, teams are assigned on the basis of specific requests for assistance from LTOs.

The FCRC has broadened its mandate, as well. SSP funds enabled community organizers working for independent LTOs, or for Tenants United for Public Housing Progress, to help tenants improve public safety and housing conditions. The FCRC's focus on social and community services complemented this work. With the SSP eliminated, most non-CBPH community organizers have been laid off.

Thus, the new FCRC model must accomplish broader goals with fewer resources. The expansion in focus, however, is consistent with the CBPH's mission and history. Since its inception in 1981, it has integrated concepts and methods of grassroots organizing with all its services.

The CBPH has adopted a structured approach to helping tenant organizations identify local priorities and develop workplans to guide FCRC efforts and LTO collaborations with other agencies. Despite the immense challenges facing public housing communities, we are excited about the potential of the new team-based model, and we look forward to broad community support for the CBPH's continued empowerment work.

*CBPH will move here soon*



## Moving Our Home

Since its founding, the CBPH central office has been located in a Dorchester BHA development for the elderly and physically disabled. Given the desperate shortage of low-income housing in Boston, the BHA would prefer to use the space for residents. We would, too.

Staff are overcrowded and are working in rooms that were never designed for office use. Xerox and mimeo machines are located in bathrooms, along with office supplies. There is no permanent place for layout equipment or document preparation. File cabinets are stuffed into closets; archives are piled up under kitchen sinks.

The central office serves not only as the CBPH administrative headquarters but also as a meeting space. Yet there is no conference room or private meeting space. The Board and staff convene for large meetings at various locations throughout the city, requiring extensive organizing, scheduling, and traveling that wastes time and money.

A solution is at hand. The Board has agreed to a five-year lease and exclusive option to purchase 2,800 square feet at 100 Terrace Street, Roxbury, newly constructed by the Boston Building Materials Cooperative. The space will include private offices, large and small conference rooms, a copy center, a kitchenette, and adequate space for a small resource library, working files, archives, equipment, and general supplies. The CBPH will renovate to its own specifications. Fundraising for purchase of the space is underway.



# PARTNERSHIPS

## Collaborations

CBPH was founded as a public-private partnership and continues to rely on collaboration as the basic framework of program operations.

A major public partner in efforts to improve public housing is the Boston Community Schools and Recreation Centers (BCS). BCS' Executive Director is an active member of the CBPH board and serves as the principal liaison between the CBPH and the Mayor. Two new BCS community centers have opened recently — in the Archdale and Gallivan housing developments — despite the state's economic crisis. BCS centers located nearby other FCRC developments provide a wide array of programs, including adult literacy, after-school child care and tutoring, summer camps, youth services, and food distribution.

The BHA is another major public partner. It has two representatives on the CBPH Board and works closely with tenants in all developments. Until fall, 1990, the BHA Community Services Department (CSD) was the principal contractor for FCRC education, employment, and training services to local tenant organizations. CSD played key roles in helping develop child care and afterschool programs, and continues to operate a youth outreach program with local tenant task forces. The BHA also works with tenants on major capital renovation projects, public safety and drug elimination initiatives, recreation programs, and other services.

Local social service agencies provide the backbone for many of the programs tenants have developed or are working on with CBPH support. Local colleges and universities also provide essential support, and the CBPH cooperates with a variety of state-wide and community-based advocacy organizations.

Since its inception, the FCRC has been funded as a collaboration involving three major partners: the Boston Foundation, the Bernard van Leer Foundation, and the City of Boston. The Boston Foundation, Boston's community foundation, was an original funder of the CBPH in 1981. It played a critical role in conceiving the FCRC, and first interested the Bernard van Leer Foundation in the Committee's work. The Bernard van Leer Foundation, based in the Netherlands, operates nearly 100 major projects in 40 countries around the world. With a focus on alternative approaches to early childhood care and education, the Foundation was attracted by the CBPH's community empowerment work with public housing residents. In 1984, Mayor Raymond L. Flynn added his personal support to the project, pledging city funds to match Boston Foundation and Bernard van Leer Foundation grants. The FCRC was born. Core funding was secured from 1984-87 and renewed through 1990, providing security for the program's rapid growth during the mid-1980s.

The Hyams Foundation has also provided operating funds since the CBPH's original demonstration project. An active supporter of the FCRC, it is working with the Boston Foundation to encourage efforts to diversity local private funding. This is critical to the program's future, because the Bernard van Leer Foundation, which normally funds projects for a maximum of six years, will begin a two-year phase-out of FCRC operating support in 1993.



*Tenant leaders and elected officials announce the opening of the Franklin Hill Day Care Center*

CBPH is inaugurating an annual fund drive in 1991, and looks forward to broader individual, corporate and local foundation support for its work with public housing residents.

CBPH has tremendous leverage power, particularly because of its collaborative structure and program development style. It has helped tenants to raise federal, state, city, and private funds for a number of LTO projects, including the development of day care centers and the construction of community buildings and recreational facilities. These revenues are separate from FCRC and WBCP income. Over the past five years, leveraged funds have totalled well over \$5.6 million, not including major state-funded redevelopment projects managed by the BHA.

CBPH was accepted as a United Way affiliate in 1988. It receives state funds for the WBCP, but no state support for the FCRC. CBPH gratefully acknowledges funding in 1990-91 from private donors and the following institutions for program operations and local tenant organization projects:

A.C. Ratschesky Foundation  
Agnes M. Lindsay Trust  
Amelia Peabody Charitable Fund  
Bank of Boston/Rockwell Charitable Trust  
Bank of New England/Noonan Memorial Fund  
Bernard van Leer Foundation  
Boston Community Schools and Recreation Centers  
Boston Public Facilities Department  
Boston Foundation  
Boston Gas Company  
Boston Housing Authority  
Boston Safe Deposit and Trust Company/Taft Trust  
Clipper Ship Foundation  
Discount Foundation  
EDIC Boston/Jobs and Community Services Dept.  
First Mutual Foundation  
Human Services Personnel Collaborative  
Hyams Foundation  
Massachusetts Department of Social Services  
Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare  
Polaroid Foundation  
United Way of Massachusetts Bay



# F O R C H A N G E

## 1990 FINANCIAL REPORT

### Balance Sheet

<b>Assets</b>	
Cash	936,435
Accounts Receivable	24,813
Pre-Paid Expenses	3,175
Equipment less depreciation	19,199
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>983,622</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Accounts Payable	17,890
Accrued Expenses	76,170
Restricted Grant Advances	584,141
Plant Fund	19,199
Office Relocation Fund	62,500
Unrestricted Fund Balance	223,722
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>983,622</b>

### Revenue and Expense Report

<b>Revenue</b>	
State Funding	455,549
Private Foundations	369,718
City of Boston Funding	139,547
United Way of Mass. Bay	32,850
Interest	44,120
Other	16,057
<b>In-Kind Contributions</b>	<b>93,452</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,151,293</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Family Community Resource Center	746,263
Washington Beech Community School	255,353
Administration and Fundraising	98,480
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,100,096</b>
<b>Excess of Resources Over Expenses</b>	<b>51,197</b>

The firm of Alfred W. Siegrist, C.P.A., P.C., has completed its audit of the financial statements of the Committee for Boston Public Housing, Inc. for the year ended December 31, 1990 and has issued its report dated January 18, 1991. Copies are available from the CBPH.

### Evaluations

With funding from the Bernard van Leer Foundation, the Committee for Boston Public Housing has benefited from two major independent evaluations of its work. In the fall of 1987, Centre Research, Inc. completed a two year study of the Family-Community Resource Center, documenting achievements in the original five FCRC sites. Several months later, Centre Research also released a comprehensive report on the Washington-Beech Community Preschool. It included research about the program's effects on children's social and cognitive development conducted by Dr. Martha Bronson, a nationally recognized expert on early childhood education.

In January, 1991, Technical Development Corporation issued its final report on the second two year study of CBPH programs. TDC conducted door-to-door surveys and extensive interviews to evaluate FCRC and WBCP program effects on individual and collective empowerment. The WBCP study involved Dr. Nancy Marshall, another early childhood research specialist, from Wellesley College. TDC also documented the CBPH's empowerment model, with a focus on providing useful information to funders, policy makers, and other organizations working with low-income urban families.

Both evaluations have informed strategic planning within the CBPH and offer objective assessments of the organization's activities and accomplishments. Complete copies or summaries are available from the CBPH.



Mayor Raymond L. Flynn meets Gallivan tenant leaders in October 1987 to discuss reopening the Butler Building. Over \$2.3 million in city funds were spent for renovations. The new community center opened in March, 1991.

Individuals or groups wishing to commemorate the CBPH's 10th anniversary are invited to donate a tax-deductible contribution made payable to the Committee for Boston Public Housing. Annual fund proceeds will be used for direct operations with local tenant organizations.

# LONG-RANGE PLANNING

## Planning for Crises

"The first Long Range Plan adopted by the CBPH Board in 1987 observed 'the depth and extent of social problems in Boston will worsen...' Increases were foreseen in teen pregnancy, drugs/alcoholism, school drop-outs, the number of frail elderly, homelessness. The prospect of economic recession seemed high and a health care crisis was predicted.

"In 1989-90, members of the second CBPH Long Range Planning Committee note little change in this outlook — with the exception that the current disastrous fiscal crisis in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts promises to have an impact on the resource side of the equation far exceeding, in a briefer period of time, any that we might have predicted even one year ago."

—Long Range Planning Committee, Final Report and Recommendations, March, 1990



In early 1987, after 15 months of deliberation, the Committee for Boston Public Housing approved its first comprehensive long range plan, calling for such changes as a larger Board comprised mostly of public housing tenants, establishment of a Tenant Coordinating Committee, and adoption of an ambitious agenda designed to promote greater visibility, participation, training and advocacy for tenants of public housing in the City of Boston. Since the Plan's inception, CBPH Board and staff have worked successfully to make the first Long Range Plan a "living document" that served as a guide for organizational activity.

On February 9, 1989, CBPH's second Long Range Planning Committee met for the first time to review a new agenda of issues and concerns. The Committee noted:

"We are clear about several points. First, it will be very important for CBPH to remain faithful to its original belief that the needs of families and children are at the center of its work and that resolution of broader community issues is directly linked to fostering the growth and development of children and youth. Furthermore, CBPH must continue to recognize the

value and impact of capacity-building at the local level. Finally, we must understand that the issues facing us are extremely complex, and will require the continuous attention of the CBPH Board of Directors."

The Board has adopted many recommendations proposed by the second Long Range Plan, including that the CBPH should:

- Enhance training and orientation of tenants, the Board, and the staff as a key to improved tenant empowerment within local tenant organizations and the CBPH;
- Be guided by and responsive to the needs articulated by local tenant organizations;
- Develop a plan for sharing its experience on a national and international basis;
- Maintain its commitment to improving access by public housing tenants to needed services;
- Increase its current fundraising activity and diversity its funding base, and continue to reduce its reliance on government funding;
- Create an ongoing strategic planning capacity; and
- Facilitate planning by local tenant organizations.



# CBPH LEADERSHIP

## BOARD

(April, 1991 to April, 1992)

Thelma Hyatt, President  
MIT Community Fellows Program  
Bart McDonough, Vice President  
Commonwealth Tenant Assn.

Cheryl Tyrell, Treasurer  
Gallivan Blvd. Tenant Task Force

Barbara Mellan, Secretary  
West Broadway Task Force

William Apgar  
Kennedy School of Government

Mercedes Cash  
Washington-Beech Tenants Assn.

William Doherty  
Boston Community Schools  
and Recreation Centers

Sandy Eaton  
Orient Heights Neighborhood Assn.

Geneva Evans  
Cathedral Tenants United

Frieda Garcia  
United South End Settlements

Elaine Gross  
Boston Housing Partnership

Cynthia Harris  
Orchard Park Tenants United

Jalanne Inboden  
Archdale Tenants on the Move

Georgia Jones  
Franklin Hill Tenants Org.

Hubie Jones  
Boston U. School of Social Work

Mel King  
MIT Community Fellow Program

Cheryl Luacaw  
Mission Extension Local Tenant  
Policy Council

Mary MacInnes  
Bunker Hill Task Force

P. Christopher Navin  
Boston Housing Authority

Ana Rivera  
Cathedral Tenants United

Michael Taylor  
Boston Private Industry Council

Luz Troncoso  
South Street Tenant Task Force

Luis Vélez  
Roxbury Youthworks  
Heather Weiss  
Harvard Family Research Project  
Sylvia Wright  
Boston Housing Authority

## STAFF

(May, 1991)

Mary Lassen  
Executive Director

Cheryl Grannum  
Office Manager

Marcia Parra  
Secretary

Geoff Wilkinson  
Fundraiser

Family-Community  
Resource Center

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Field Coordinator

Training Team  
Marie-Thérèse Browne  
Team Leader

Timothy Koch  
Joan Miller  
Jacqueline Thureson

Program Development Team

Carol Katz  
Team Leader

Jeanne Curry  
Farid Moise  
Donna Reeves-Jackson

Community Organizing Team

Steve Schnapp  
Team Leader

Patricia Farrar  
Maria Velazquez

Washington-Beech  
Community Preschool

Ellen Wolpert  
Director

Nancy Dukes  
Jennifer James  
Helen McCroskey  
Carol Olafajo  
Lanita Smith  
Linette Tucker

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Empowerment begins at home. To that end, the CBPH's first Long Range Plan, adopted in 1987, made several structural changes in the Board, aimed primarily at increasing tenant participation and power.*

*Most dramatic of these was the agreement that public housing tenants themselves should comprise the majority of the Board at all times. The number of seats was increased to 25 and a Tenant Coordinating Committee was formed to help improve tenant cooperation and input into policy. Today's Board includes 17 women and 14 people of color. Thirteen of the 25 members are public housing tenants, including all but one of the CBPH's officers and Executive Committee members.*

## CREDITS

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